

REAL Trends Interview with Break Through Broker

Free tools, marketing flyers, and content for my sales professionals? You can't be serious!

By Travis Saxton, marketing and technology manager

This month, we sit down with Eric Sachs and Nathan Froelich, co-founders of Break Through Broker. With a truly unique approach to their product and service offerings, Break Through Broker burst onto the real estate radar in the last year.

For those brokers and sales professionals out there struggling to find simple tools to not only complete their routine tasks but also communicate effectively to the consumer this is the website for you.

REAL Trends: Tell us about the evolution of Break Through Broker.



Eric Sachs

Eric: Nathan and I started our own independent company in northern Colorado and it grew to about 55 agents. In the 4 year growth period, we saw our agents struggling to find some of the basic tools like property flyers, newsletters, business planning tools without being nickel and dimed to get bits and pieces here or there. At that point, we thought our struggles were because we were an independent company and didn't have a strong network. So, we looked into franchise support from big brands and were acquired by a national brand in 2010. We then grew to over 70 agents, but noticed agents were still having the same challenges as before, with very little improvement. With this problem evident in our industry, Nathan and I decided to build a website that included the day-to-day items a sales professional needs to compete and grow. We provide help with marketing, education, business

tools, collaboration, communications and more on a free (advertising supported) platform.

REAL Trends: What challenges do you help sales professionals overcome?

Nathan: We see agents as micro businesses, as they have to be the accountant, receptionist, graphic designer, and salesperson. They are trying to manage all of these tasks and many agents do all of it on their own. As a result, many basic fundamentals are often



Nathan Froelich

neglected, such as marketing, due to limited time or resources. So, we looked at the areas where agents typically struggle daily and deliver solutions to meet those needs. For example, we have a design/print portal where agents can go in and build brochures, marketing materials,

postcards or email newsletters in a high quality, professional environment. It's a very easy to use interface with a plug-and-play type input. Agents download a pdf, print it and they are off and running with no need to know complicated programs. We also offer business plans with no slant in any of our materials, because we are not affiliated with any brands. We produce items from the agent perspective.

Eric: Because we are so focused and constantly take input and challenges from agents, we have the agility to adjust to their needs and make the necessary changes needed to address the current

market situations. For example, the market has just begun to experience low inventories. We had agents come to us requesting tools that deal with low inventories, and we immediately produced relevant materials to meet their needs. Many other institutional websites just aren't as agile as that.

REAL Trends: *Take me through the core areas in which you help agents:*

1. Print/Design/Content Section of our site.
2. Succeed section for business related info.
Business plans, marketing plans, the referral playbook, and accounting. This section is all about business development.
3. Learn section has a lot of blogs, guest commentary, training and education along with videos from industry experts.

Eric: Our website offers open source content, so agents send us what is working for them. One example is a buyer's education presentation, which we adapted and presented for all agents to use. We also had a broker from a popular company send us their "things to do today" checklist that all

REAL Trends: *Who is your platform available to?*

Nathan: Any and all agents, whether independent or affiliated with a brand, and from all over the country, or world for that matter. We have been seen in all 50 states and we have a lot of traffic from core real estate states like New York, California, Florida, of course our backyard in Colorado, but we are also seeing growth internationally. The website is truly open source; no logins, you just get there and start using the tools. Many of our loudest and most vocal fans are coming from large brands.

REAL Trends: *How do you see technology affecting our industry over the next few years?*

Nathan: As the next generation of real estate agents come into the market, a lot of new technology is going to be embraced, which some existing agents don't currently use, like video, mobile tools, CRMs, etc. Online lead generation, and how to make it work effectively—staying away from the methods that don't work—will be crucial.

Eric: I would agree with Nathan: I think agents have to embrace mobile. I see that the client is sometimes more educated in the area they are going to be than the agent. This may become even more apparent as younger consumers flow into the market. With increased technology over the coming years, agents need to get more innovative in how they present their services and value proposition to these consumers.

REAL Trends: *Final thoughts?*

Eric: Everything in our current model is completely free. We've been asked if that will change, and it will not. Everything you currently see is just the beginning; we have plans to launch phase 2 and 3 of our services—which also will be free—to bring even more value to sales professionals.

Visit breakthroughbroker.com to get these free tools. ■

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